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ABSTRACT

A discussion of adult education in a changing American society is presented in the document. Section 1, Adult Education in American Society, examines societal changes and educational goals as well as the structure and organization of adult education programs. Section 2, The Delivery System of Adult Education, discusses: (1) the audience; (2) funding sources, including private foundations, State, and Federal governments; (3) institutions, examining educational and noneducational institutions; (4) new institutions or emerging forms, discussing adult learning centers; and (5) problems without an institutional base or system for resolution, examining public affairs, gerontology, and early childhood development. Section 3, Some Continuing Concerns, includes: (1) financing of adult education, discussing the present pattern of financing; (2) compulsory or mandatory participation in adult education, presenting illustrations of program participation; and (3) planning in adult education, discussing factors involved. Section 4, Adult Education as a Profession of Field of Study, discusses national adult education associations, including the Coalition of Adult Education Organizations (CAEO), and Education Resources Information Center (ERIC). It is stated that adult educators are increasingly influencing decision-making processes affecting educational development, trends, and issues. (LH)

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Adult Education in American Society— Some Developments, Trends and Issues

Summary

Many forces are changing American society from one of static stabilities to one of dynamic stabilities characterized not by forms but of processes. The goal of adult education is to assist all adults to make the transition by providing opportunities to participate in educational experience—all within the context of life-long learning. The shifts in need and demand are putting a strain on the delivery system of adult education. The delivery system has many interrelated components but the three that are causing major concerns are the audience funding sources and institutions. The educational institutions which have traditionally supported adult education are changing—by retrenching and by shifting emphasis or in some cases by making bold new thrusts. Also, many non-educational institutions are incorporating adult education instrumentally into their missions. At the same time new institutions and emerging forms are becoming evident. While these developments are taking place some major social problems such as public affairs, gerontology and early childhood development are without an overall institutional base or system for their solution. Some continuing concerns such as planning and financing as well as mandatory participation or compulsory adult education are receiving substantial consideration. Adult educators are having an increasing influence in the decision-making process affecting all of these developments, trends and issues.

La formation des adultes dans la société américaine – des développements, tendances et points de discussion

Résumé

Maintes forces sont en train de transformer la société américaine, dont la nature sera à l'avenir conditionnée par des stabilités dynamiques caractérisées non pas par des formes, mais par des procédés. Le but de la formation des adultes est de fournir par moyen de l'éducation permanente à chaque adulte la possibilité de maîtriser ces changements. Les déplacements de demande et de besoin pèsent sur la réseau de distribution de la formation des adultes, surtout pour ce qui concerne la structure des participants, les sources financières et la forme des institutions. Les établissements d'enseignement qui ont traditionnellement soutenu la formation des adultes sont en train de développer de nouvelles positions et d'accentuer de nouveaux intérêts, même parfois de franchir des pas entièrement nou-

veaux. Il y a aussi beaucoup d'institutions non pédagogiques qui incorporent la formation des adultes dans leur mission comme enrichissement instrumental. En même temps de nouvelles institutions et de nouvelles formes d'éducation se mettent en évidence. Alors que ces développements se déroulent, il y a des graves problèmes sociaux comme les affaires publiques, la gérontologie et le développement de la première enfance qui manquent d'un système étendu de solutions. Quelques problèmes à long terme comme par exemple planification ou financement ainsi que la participation imposée ou la formation des adultes réglementée par loi reçoivent maintenant un degré considérable d'attention. Les formateurs des adultes portent une influence croissante sur les procédés de décision qui contrôlent toutes ces questions, ces tendances et ces développements.

Erwachsenenbildung in der amerikanischen Gesellschaft – einige Entwicklungen, Tendenzen und Sachverhalte

Zusammenfassung

Eine Vielzahl verschiedener Kräfte verändert das Gesicht der amerikanischen Gesellschaft, einer Gesellschaft, deren Stabilität fortan mehr dynamischer denn statischer Natur sein wird und die sich nicht durch Formen, sondern durch Prozesse ausweist. Die Aufgabe der Erwachsenenbildung besteht darin, alle Erwachsenen in diesem Umformungsprozeß durch die Bereitstellung von Möglichkeiten im Kontext lebenslangen Lernens zu unterstützen. Die Nachfrage- und Bedürfnisverlagerungen belasten das bestehende Verteilersystem der Erwachsenenbildung, vor allem in bezug auf Teilnehmerstrukturen, Finanzierungsmöglichkeiten und Institutionalförmlichkeiten. Die pädagogischen Einrichtungen, die die Erwachsenenbildung bislang unterstützt haben, unterziehen sich einem Wandel, setzen andere Akzente und entwickeln mitunter kühne neue Vorstellungen. Daneben beziehen viele Institutionen, die sich bis dato nicht mit Bildungsaufgaben befaßten, Erwachsenenbildung als instrumentelle Bereicherung in ihre Mission ein. Gleichzeitig tauchen neue Institutionen und Bildungsformen auf. Während sich diese Entwicklungen vollziehen, entbehren manche gravierende soziale Probleme, wie Öffentlichkeitsangelegenheiten, Gerontologie und frühkindheitliche Entwicklung, noch immer eines umfassenden institutionellen Lösungssystems. Einigen Langzeitproblemen wie Planung und Finanzierung, Teilnahmepflicht oder gesetzlich vorgeschriebene Erwachsenenbildung wird beträchtliche Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt. Erwachsenenbildner verfügen über ein wachsendes Maß an Einfluß auf den Entscheidungsprozeß, der diese Entwicklungen, Trends und Sachverhalte steuert.

I. Adult Education in American Society

A. Introductory Statement

American society appears to be in transition from a stage of static stability that is no longer workable to a new stage that has not clearly emerged. The forces that are bringing about this vast and profound transition include: increasing complexity of living, greater mobility, rapid technological change, economic growth, longer life, and a shortening work week. Furthermore these forces are not temporary—they are inherent, pandemic, and increasing in strength. Some recent national political and social issues, such as those centering about the environment and inflation, as well as the world-wide crisis of energy, provide dramatic examples of great and pressing problems. The transition must be from one of static stabilities to one of dynamic stabilities characterized not by forms but by processes.

These changes which must be considered normal in contemporary society have caused the lessening of stability, individually, nationally, and internationally. In some respects there is a sense of helplessness and powerlessness on the part of individuals to influence the course of their lives. People are becoming profoundly dissatisfied with, even mistrustful of, many of their social institutions, including educational institutions.

While finding themselves in a state of disequilibrium there is developing a sense of urgency by adults to do something about their dilemma. There is developing on the part of more and more individuals, a desire to obtain the knowledge and to develop the ability to be more effective as individual citizens. In this way they can or can hope to exert some control, albeit limited, over their individual and their nation's destinies. These concerns and desires include all adults—from the groups that have never achieved identity or participation in the social, political, and economic decision-making process, to the efforts of the most informed and active persons in retaining or regaining a sense of identity and control.

In order to bring about this urgent change it is being increasingly realized that massive effort is required. Americans are looking to adult education as one agent for change. Americans since the birth of the nation have had great faith in the power of education to produce a high quality of life. The growth in and commitment to education resulted in large and impressive systems for the education of children and youth on the part of both the public and private sectors. Now major concern is being directed to adult education in order to achieve, or regain recognition and participation. This increasing emphasis on adult education is not occurring in isolation, but rather is being developed as part of the concept of life-long education. Indeed adult education may be the most important task of the 1970's.

In the United States there is no general agreement on terms. Adult education, continuing education, extension and in-service education, and other terms are often used synonymously, or the same terms may be used by different agencies for different types of programs. It should be clear also that adult education—at least many of its new developments—should not be confused with adult schooling. In this statement, adult education refers to the education of learners who are in the phase of the life span called adulthood. These adults are consciously and actively engaged in experiences in order to achieve educa-

tional goals for self-improvement and the improvement of society. They are concurrently assuming responsibilities as workers, citizens, and as heads of families. The concern for the state of society is basically an individual matter. Likewise, the focus for the education of adults, in the final analysis, is upon the individual as a learner. The goal of adult education is to help adults to become self-directed and to assume responsibility for and the achievement of an individual life-long educational plan or process.

B. Structure and Organization of Adult Education

Education in the United States has no national authority, structure, or organization. By law, education is under the jurisdiction of the fifty states, which set policies and regulations concerning many educational matters. However, even within the states the local school boards have major responsibility for the public schools, and only the local constituents vote on school budgets and other matters. There is no central authority at the Federal level and only to a limited extent at the state level. This fact does not mean that the Federal government does not give funds to the states or to other institutions or organizations for educational or educationally related activities. It appropriates funds, but frequently these are funneled through the state and often down through another educational agency such as the public schools or the university. Funds are also given to institutions that are established for other purposes but that do conduct educational activities. In many cases non-government agencies conduct educational programs and may be subject to government regulations in order to receive government financial support.

The above statements, which apply to all of education, are equally true of adult education. There is no central authority at any level, and in the case of adult education a wide range of agencies frequently operates without any policies or regulations by the state, or other controlling organizations. Included are private and proprietary agencies. This structure sometimes results in a lack of coordination and overlapping of functions. However, on balance, this seeming weakness is indeed the great strength of the American system of adult education. It permits and encourages a great variety of alternative systems and a multitude of sponsors, organizations, and agencies to develop programs. It also encourages innovation, the creation of new agencies, new sources and patterns of funding, and above all a delivery system responsive to the needs of adults in all areas of life.

II. The Delivery System of Adult Education

The sense of urgency in both the need and demand for adult education on a national scale constitutes a challenge to educators to deliver the required opportunities for adults to learn. The delivery system for adult education is composed of a number of interrelated components. Some of these components are putting a special strain upon the system. They are affecting the existing system and will have a significant impact upon its future development. Change has particularly affected three components of the delivery system. These are: 1. The audience the system seeks to reach. 2. The funding sources of adult education. 3. The institutions and/or organizations and agencies sponsoring the adult education programs.

A. The Audience

The goal of any educational delivery system is to provide opportunities that are realistically available and feasible for all who wish to participate. In adult education the accomplishment of this goal involves more regular and continuing participation by those adults who have previously been involved in only a few learning experiences. It includes participation of more people of the type now participating. It also includes reaching the mass of adults who have not been previously reached. To reach this enlarged and varied audience, programs, modules, packages and other formats are being developed. Likewise new media are being developed to complement what now exists. New facilities and resources are also being utilized. Above all, the rôle of the teacher or leader is being viewed as that of a facilitator of learning rather than a transmitter of knowledge. New "non-traditional" experiences are being created to assist the adult to learn what is needed and desired at places, times, and with formats that are convenient. These materials and experiences must be appropriate to varying learning abilities, skills, and capacities of an expanded range and number of adults. If the objective of developing self-directed adult learners is to be achieved, then, even more ways need to be devised to assist the adult in learning how to learn and to take responsibility for planning an individual life-long flexible program.

B. Funding Sources

In order to achieve the goal of life-long education for all adults, drastic changes must be made in the financial arrangements for agencies. Ways must be found to provide adults with opportunities to continue their education, irrespective of the ability to pay. This problem is very real because the traditional idea of seminars, conferences and short and long courses during adulthood is no longer sufficient. Indeed, in the context of life-long education, what is now the extent of education for most adults is merely tokenism. To achieve the goal of self-directed life-long education, a great increase in opportunities must be provided for all adults to move in and out of learning experiences throughout the whole span of adulthood as their needs and desires indicate. Concurrently with the expansion in need for subsidized participation, two major funding sources, foundations and government, have changed their traditional funding patterns. The general problem of financing adult education in the United States will be discussed later, but it is useful to discuss two specific aspects because they are closely related to the topic of institutions which is discussed immediately following this section.

Private Foundations. In the United States the foundations have provided major funding and support of adult education. These foundations do not directly offer adult education but do provide funds to other public, private, and not-for-profit educational institutions.

In the past couple of decades, two major foundations have entered the field of adult education presumably because they recognize its significance. Both made great advances possible, and then as major supporters, both withdrew. The first, during the 1920's, 1930's, and 1940's, was the Carnegie Corporation, which had a major impact particularly through the Association for Adult Education, and second, during the 1950's, was the Ford Foundation, which operated through the Fund for Adult Education (FAE).

One of the major efforts of the Fund for Adult Education was to support the Center

for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults (CSLEA). The CSLEA was proposed by the Association of University Evening Colleges and explains why major assistance was given to four-year colleges, Negro colleges and universities, as well as international adult education. The FAE also provided substantial grants for the development of innovative programs. Following a policy decision, Ford Foundation cut off funding for FAE and it ceased functioning in 1961. Because the CSLEA received its major support from FAE, it, in turn, ended in the mid-1960's. The FAE and CSLEA have not been replaced by major foundation focusing on adult education as a field in its own right and with its peculiar needs. Major foundations, including Carnegie, Rockefeller, Ford and the Kellogg Foundation, still support many projects in adult education, but usually they focus sharply, either on special aspects of the field, or on adult education as a means to other ends. Recently foundations have given funds for continuing education, for example, in nursing and other areas of health care and related programs. Residential adult education was given prominence by the Kellogg Foundation, which financed the Continuing Education Centers at universities such as Michigan State, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Georgia, Notre Dame and Chicago.

Federal and state governments conduct many adult education programs and, in addition, like foundations, have traditionally supported adult or continuing education instrumentally, that is, as means to desired ends with grants for specific purposes. For example, the Cooperative Extension Service, Americanization, career education, and vocational training have been funded in order for society to achieve broader goals. This instrumental approach by Federal and state and municipal governments has become more concentrated in recent years with funding, for example, for manpower training, basic education and community development.

This pervasive tendency by foundations and governments to focus on specific aspects and/or objectives has reinforced the movement by educational institutions to shift their emphases to acquire funds.

C. Institutions

Perhaps the most important component in the delivery system of Adult Education is the nature of the institutions, organizations or agencies which sponsor educational programs for adults. In this statement some comments about the changing focus in a few of these institutions may help to provide an understanding of the flux in the present delivery system. These institutions will be considered in three categories of: 1. educational institutions; 2. non-educational institutions; 3. new institutions or emerging forms.

1. Educational Institutions

It has long been recognized that most educational institutions in the United States at all levels—from the public school to the college and university—have considered adult education peripheral to their major missions. One major exception has been the public institutions that were established with educational service to the public as a legislatively-mandated mission. A second exception is found in the few educational institutions such as Chautauqua that were designed for adults. All of these educational institutions are changing either in emphasis, by retrenchment, or in some cases by expansion.

One of the largest and most successful adult education systems in the United States—the *Cooperative Extension Service* (CES—agriculture and home economics)—has been trying for more than two decades to redefine its mission and goals to fit a people who are no longer rural but preponderantly urban. The CES is trying to deal with populations and problems for which its tradition has not prepared it. These populations include the black and Spanish-speaking residents of the urban ghettos with problems such as unemployment and the inability to cope with urban life. Encouraging achievements could be cited, here and there, but the redefinition of the mission and goals of the CES has not solved the basic contrast between rural life, which is both a way of life and a way of making a living, and urban life characterized by atomization and heterogeneity.

The *state universities* that are not land-grant institutions are in many cases either retrenching their general extension services because of general budget tightening or they are realigning programs for which special funds are available. In some cases they are both retrenching and realigning.

Private colleges and universities have a double reason for retrenching the adult education programs. First, they have no legislatively-mandated mission for adult education and secondly, they are in a tight budgetary pinch because of very limited if any government funds, and because they are in an unequal financial competition with public colleges and universities. They face, in its sharpest form, the need which presses all colleges and universities to redefine themselves and their missions. They need to redetermine not only what they can and should do, but often their decisions pivot upon accommodations ("trade-offs") between the ideal and the expedient. The latter is usually determined by available funds.

While some institutions are retrenching or at least not moving forward, there is a resurgence of interest on the part of others. Some colleges and universities are recognizing the vast potential of adult education. For example, the presidents of a few public and private universities have recently made explicit the rôle of universities in adult education and in the life-long education process. Many small colleges and universities are exploring and beginning adult education programs. In some cases they are motivated by the hope of utilizing any unused resources which have resulted from declining numbers of full-time students and thus to help balance the institutional budget. Nevertheless, they are providing alternative educational experiences for adults.

During the past twenty years or so, two distinctively new types of educational institutions have started in the United States that have designated missions to concern themselves with adult education. One is the community school, the other is the junior-community college. The community school is a public school with a concern to serve not only the educational needs of its own public but to serve the educational needs of the entire community. The junior-community college is a two-year college that embraces the mission of preparing students for further college work and of preparing students for immediate entrance into vocational employment. Many examples of outstanding achievement by both community schools and junior-community colleges could be cited. It would be a mistake either to ignore them as insignificant or to claim too much. It certainly is hopeful that they will not devolve in the old form typical of some higher education institutions but rather evolve into new ones.

The *public schools* in general usually had to support their programs by meeting expenses for at least direct costs. Staff at the state level is usually made available to assist the local directors to develop adult education programs. Some substantial funds have been appropriated by government to support specific programs such as adult basic education. This adult basic education program is a national effort to enable previously unreached adults to obtain basic learning skills. Funds are provided for all aspects including research, educational resources, teaching, training and recruitment. Other than for this, program funds available for general development are indeed limited and most of them have to come from tuition.

During the 1950's, with substantial aid from the Fund for Adult Education, many *public libraries* played an important rôle in adult education as active agencies. Now struggling for survival, particularly large city libraries have retrenched to being repositories and providing information and other services. Large amounts of Federal and state funds are going into libraries, but not to public libraries and not for adult education. Most of the money is going to specialized libraries such as those in the fields of health, science, and vocational and technical services for the development of information storage, retrieval, and delivery services.

There are other educational institutions, such as public and preparatory *correspondence schools* and *public broadcasting stations* which are reaching significant adult audiences.

2. Non-Educational Institutions

There is much evidence to suggest that there are more systematic learners outside of the formal educational institutions than are participating in them. Whether this assessment is now correct depends to a large extent on definition and it would also involve a complicated statistical base and analysis to prove the point. However, it is beyond dispute to state that the adult education activities taking place outside of the traditional educational institutions far exceed, by any system of accounting, the activities that take place within them.

There are a number of institutions established for purposes other than those of education that are now conducting adult education programs. It is impossible to give more than a suggested list of these institutions. Representative are: the military, government agencies at all levels, business and industry, the professions and vocations, voluntary agencies including museums and religious groups, unions, organizations, formal and informal, at all levels, the now elaborate broadcasting system of television and radio stations, museums and action-oriented groups.

Again, it is emphasized that systematic continuous learning has to a large extent been incorporated in the processes of American life, and will increasingly be incorporated. The word "incorporated" is carefully chosen to imply an essential vital function, such as breathing and eating.

A few illustrations will provide specificity, but it is realized that the selection may obscure the scope and variety of what is involved.

The American *armed forces* are one of the largest and most effective adult education agencies in the United States. This long-term trend in adult education is enhanced by the current reliance upon professional (in contrast to conscripted) personnel. What is at stake is effectiveness, and upon the effectiveness of the armed forces even national survival may

turn. Systematic, periodic, adult learning by all personnel, from the rawest recruit to the highest general or admiral, is considered a part of duty. A soldier, sailor, marine, or airman is assigned, at this time or that, to this school (or course, or training regiment, or "experience"—there is no other word for some of the forms), just as at other times he may be assigned to duty aboard a ship or a plane, or in the field.

The *airlines*, particularly the largest, have adult education and training programs, with facilities, equipment, methods, and teaching staff of a high order.

Governments discover that to execute the missions of their agencies or to achieve the objectives of their own programs, they must execute, or arrange for, systematic learning experiences—often far beyond their own personnel. The Government Training Employee Training Act of 1956 was significant in this area. The need for systematic adult education has been discovered by the professional governmental structures—the Civil Service machineries on Federal, state, and municipal levels. It has been discovered also by "task force" agencies. For example, many government agencies discover that, to reduce poverty and relief rolls, they must execute, or arrange for, programs of adult basic education and/or vocational training.

Businesses and industries discover that, just as they must constantly up-date and improve their facilities and technologies, so must they constantly advance their personnel—even to survive in competition—let alone to grow. They must execute, or arrange for systematic continuous learning opportunities for their personnel—from the newest employee to the top executive, and often also their policy-making board of trustees.

The *professions* are all well aware of the importance of adult education. For example, if physicians, nurses or others in health care do not realize that they must continuously up-date and advance their knowledge and skills and re-examine their attitudes toward, not just health care, but also health-care delivery, they may be pressured to do. Pressures may take the form of relicensure, renewal of membership in professional society, or renewal of privileges in a hospital that demand assessment of performance by professional standards review organizations.

A *voluntary or civic organization* with the goal of serving the public, or particular publics, discovers that it must execute or arrange for (or both), systematic continuous learning experiences not only for its staff, board members, and volunteer aides, but also for its publics. For example, the control of diseases, such as cancer, heart attacks or strokes, requires the lay public to be able to recognize symptoms, to undergo periodic checkups, and to make changes in personal behavior.

In such pervasive circumstances, it would be surprising if the structures, forms, and processes of adult education remained unchanged. They do not. Just as the sponsorship, auspices and exeration of adult education are multiplying and mutating, so are the forms and arrangements of the learning opportunities themselves. The adult education programs of non-educational institutions are of increasing significance in the life-long learning process.

D. New Institutions or Emerging Forms

The educational and non-educational institutions that are providing adult education programs are continually changing. They do so in order to keep apace and to lead in offering

experiences that assist the adult to learn. In addition to changes in educational and non-educational institutions, program forms are emerging that as yet almost defy classification. There are many examples of exciting "non-traditional" experiences that are being made available to adults in new forms. While these new thrusts are not yet systemized, there is a new institution emerging that is generically called the adult learning center and which combines many attributes of both the educational and non-educational institutions. These centers have various titles such as teaching centers, learning laboratories, documentation centers, and research centers. In some cases they are extensions of libraries or expansions of existing centers to include adults. However, in this statement the term is used in a generic sense. These centers have resources in materials and services and have the capability of delivering them to potential learners, and accordingly they provide a new and alternate experience for many adults.

The centers are often physical entities that are housed in a facility whose design and decor are appropriate and attractive to those whom it seeks to serve. A center may be set up to serve many purposes or it may be designed to serve a particular area such as adult basic education. The centers are usually designed on the basis that the adult should become self-directed both in the setting of goals and in the manner in which they are to be achieved. In other words, the responsibility for learning is shifted to the learner, and hence the rôle of the instructor or teacher shifts from one of instructing to one of facilitating.

The centers usually have a wide range of resource materials that are relevant to adults with varied backgrounds and capabilities. These materials may be made available at times and in a manner convenient to adults as they carry on their other responsibilities. They help to bridge the gap between the wide range of resources and the specific need of the adult. Emphasis is often shifted from the "how to do it" to the "how to use it" resources.

The centers are designed to serve a number of different types of clientele although probably no one center endeavors to serve them all. First, centers are designed to assist adults themselves. Some adults use the centers to remedy deficiencies in previous education. It is noted that what may appear to be remedial to a teacher or administrator may be viewed as a new and challenging experience for the adult who is participating. Other adults engage in educational activities because they need specific skills or knowledge that prepare them to effectively participate in other experiences that help them achieve their objective. Still other adults participate in adult education to build upon their present competencies. Secondly, the centers serve as a resource for the professional staff who direct other educational programs for adults. Thirdly, they may provide complementary services or programs to other adult education agencies. Fourthly, they may assist volunteers in the field of adult education. Learning centers are then another alternative to reach the objectives held by adults who have different economic and social status than those now reached by the adult educational system.

The learning centers have many types of learning experiences and services available for adults, which if not adult education in a strict sense, are certainly related to and contribute to the total learning opportunities available to adults. Although no one learning center may have all of the elements, the list includes: a referral service, materials, equipment and facilities, production of new materials, counseling services, advocate services, diagnostic services, internships and instructional programs.

It is evident that these adult learning centers are emerging as identifiable agencies or

institutions of adult education. However, it should definitely be made clear that many of the resources and elements of the learning centers are also being developed as part of the other agencies previously cited which are in turn part of the delivery system of adult education. It has been stated that existing agencies are changing and new ones are emerging. The expansion of resources is clearly an evidence of the change.

Adult learning centers still have problems. One problem is finance. As the informal network of learning centers develops, it is hoped that it will be possible for all adults or agencies to participate in the learning center and its services even though they do not have the ability to pay. At the present time, some of the centers are sponsored by government grants, some by public schools, some by libraries, and some by numerous other agencies. In several cases learning centers are an adjunct to another adult education agency. A number of the centers are able to provide their services free of charge to the individuals and to the agencies. In other cases, there is a fee to the individual or to the agency that uses the service.

The serious implication of financing is its relationship to the commitment to the learner. If financing is not continued, commitment to the learner, albeit not a legal commitment, is in effect not honored. Then the adult may become alienated to learning and thereby becomes not only a dropout from the center, but a dropout from learning.

A second major issue of adult learning centers is the recruitment of adults. Again, this problem is not unique to adult learning centers but simply serves as an example of the difficulty of reaching new audiences. It is apparent that adult education is competing for the time of adults who have many other needs and interests to be met. One of the important aspects to get across to an individual is the idea that the center is there to help individuals to help themselves to become self-directed. Certainly different approaches to recruiting are becoming more common and in many cases work very effectively. Adult education has to recognize that it is in competition for the time of the people. In simple language, it must have a good product and it must be sold.

Adult learning centers are a fine example of new alternatives in the delivery system of adult education. No more than other programs in the past will they become a panacea, but they do provide meaningful and relevant experiences that are a breath of fresh air for adults.

The above sketch of the changing nature and trends in adult education, audiences, funding sources and institutions is not to indicate a general decline in total service nor to suggest encouraging developments. It is rather to indicate the large and complex shifts in goals, objectives and approaches in these three components of the delivery system of adult education that contribute its lack of current stability.

E. Problems Without an Institutional Base or System for Resolution

While the delivery system in the institutions described in the above three categories is broad and complex, there are some problems in society that it has not solved. Some of these major problems could be alleviated by adult education, but no overall institutional base or framework exists—nor is there an informal system among diverse agencies—from which to solve the problems.

The lack of a vigorous, many-sided, and well-financed array of continuing education

opportunities in *public affairs* is a cause for deep concern. Of course, public affairs, such as foreign policy, national economic policy, the conservation of resources, and the pollution of the planet, receive much attention. But American society has no overall institutional base or system at any level—national, state or local—for programs of adult education in public affairs comparable to those in some other areas such as professional and vocational affairs.

Similarly, American society has no overall institutional base or system for adult education programs in the area of *gerontology*. The lack is serious and will become more so. The population is increasing and people are living longer into the period of life beyond what is now regarded as active life. Also, compulsory retirement has been set at 65 years in many fields and because of competition for employment and advancement, the pressures are mounting to lower the age of retirement. It is difficult for American society, noted for its idolatry of youth and its queasiness about aging and dying, to change to value the later years. However, beginnings of change have been made in less deeply rooted attitudes: fostering the attitude that one retires to a meaningful period of life and work, not just from a different kind of period and activity, fostering the attitude that a person must start early in life to build up an intellectual, emotional, and spiritual retirement fund, not just an income retirement fund, fostering the realization that two needs can be mated to give birth to an opportunity, that is, giving older people useful rôles and thereby adding human contributions that will further enhance the quality of life in our society. There is no overall institutional base from which to work to solve the problem.

A third area requiring attention that has no institutional base or system is the education of adults about *early childhood development*. In recent years research in the United States and elsewhere has revealed the critical nature of the years before birth and after birth until about the beginning of formal schooling: Health, attitudes toward self and others, and the bases of communication are involved. While the desired changes are to be in the child, it is the adult who creates the environment for childhood learning. At the same time as the knowledge is being discovered, deep changes have been occurring in related areas of American life, such as: in the rôle of women, and in the relationship between men and women and in the family. The pressure is increasing for a vast program for adults in the area of early childhood education in a changing society. While there are exciting developments, there is not a substantial institutional base or system to bring about the change.

The list of important areas of neglect could be extended, of course. It would be easy to say, "These are bits of unfinished business." To say such would be true, for always there will be unfinished business. But more is involved. It is precisely in such large areas of concern that the categorical or specialized or instrumental approach to adult education is most deficient. As stated, the foundations and government agencies seem to be limiting their objectives and must be encouraged to engage the challenge presented in such large basic problems of adults as the three that have been given as illustrations.

III. Some Continuing Concerns

In this statement, a number of problems have been discussed or at least mentioned in the context of the concept and delivery system of adult education. These and other problems or concerns not mentioned that continue to recur include: motivation, recruitment, pro-

motion, evaluation, accountability, research, need assessment, quality of program, and staff development. In most of these areas there have been and continue to be changes in the nature of the problem and in the resolution.

There are, however, three areas that are currently of philosophical and/or practical significance and prime importance that will be described in more detail. The areas are: the financing of adult education, compulsory or mandatory participation in adult education, and planning in adult education. Just as each of these areas is related to the previous statement, they are also closely inter-related. However, they will be discussed separately.

A. Financing of Adult Education

It has been stated that in the United States there is no one agency governing or coordinating adult education. It follows that there is no one agency responsible for the financing of adult education. For this reason it is difficult to get reliable data on the amount or corresponding percentages of funding for various agencies or from various sources. The basic issue of who should pay for adult education evokes no clear-cut response. There seems to be little question, however, that in theory at least, no adult should be deprived of the opportunity for learning. As stated earlier, if there is to be implementation of the concept of continuing life-long learning, opportunity for adults must be provided irrespective of the ability to pay. In addition, the nation can't afford to discriminate among its citizens if they are to effectively contribute to their own growth to the maximum of their potential and to society.

One solution must be to apply the cost-benefit-theory—"who benefits" is related to "who pays." For example, some people believe that the employer should provide for the vocational education of his employees, if not for their general education as well. Other people advocate that the government take responsibility for vocational programs as well as for programs to improve public responsibility. On the other hand, still other people argue that the individual should pay for the programs that are for self-fulfillment. Charitable foundations have also played a significant rôle by making grants for research and innovative programs.

The present sources of funds in the United States include the following forms: employers provide tuition for their employees to attend adult education classes on the premises or they may pay fees at other adult education agencies; professional organizations arrange adult education programs for their members or contract out to other agencies; community and service clubs provide adult education programs for their members; volunteer and charitable organizations offer programs for their members and in some instances to the general or selected publics; Federal, state, and local governments make grants for programs authorized by law to adult education agencies, adult education programs, or to employees, or they pay tuition for government employees at other adult education agencies; organizations and foundations grant funds to agencies for the development and operation of new and usually innovative programs; agencies have fund-raising campaigns among their members and the public in order to support adult education programs and agencies charge fees to the adults whom they serve, and in some cases provide scholarships or grants for individuals who otherwise cannot pay.

In general, the administrators and sponsors of adult education programs seem to have

assumed the responsibility for obtaining funds for their programs. In their ingenuity resides much of the success of adult education in the United States.

The massive federally-funded programs, channeled through state administrations, are a prime example of providing opportunities for the education of adults who cannot pay. The grants to military personnel for education after completing service is another example of a successful method of financing which eliminates the problem of ability to pay. The expansion of this concept to other forms of service is being explored. Perhaps alternative financing as well as concurrent periods of work, service, volunteer efforts and adult education could be arranged to extend over the life span. Also individuals might be given a number of certificates or units for education that would not expire at sixteen years of age, but extend over the life span. The issues of who should pay and particularly who does pay have influences on the programs that are offered. These influences effect the quality of programs, number of adult participants, the efficiency of operation, the opportunities for innovation and research.

The present pattern of financing also affects the stability and continuity of programs. A number of programs are financed by government grants that are available for specified purposes for a given period of time, often only for one year. It should be noted that some grants are renewable for additional periods, perhaps extending over several years. However, the sudden build-up of a program and then discontinuance or constant questioning for continuance creates instability and uncertainty. For example, it is difficult to recruit qualified staff for a short period, morale problems are created when students are uncertain whether they will be able to complete a program, and difficulty arises in obtaining adequate resources and facilities. In contrast, the federally-funded adult basic education program has been built into the public school system and has had continuing funding which partly accounts for its success.

One major issue relates to the complex and perennial matter of federal financing of adult education. The change in the process of federal financing from grants in aid for specific projects to revenue-sharing will require new strategies for obtaining funds. As previously stated, the federal government now provides funds for specific projects and programs in many areas including adult education. However, after approval and funding, the programs may be administered by state or other agencies. The so-called revenue-sharing plan means that many specific projects including adult education will be discontinued. Funds (revenue) will be allocated (shared) in blocks to the states and other government agencies. Since these funds will not be designated for adult education or any other specific purpose, the funds will be allocated at the discretion of the government agency at the local level receiving the funds. This change in the process of federal financing from grants for designated projects to revenue sharing will require new strategies for getting the program into operation. This change, which is concurrent with general tightening of institutional budgets, will also require continuing accountability to sponsors and the public as well as to the adults themselves for the scope, quality, and relevance of adult education programs.

B. Compulsory or Mandatory Participation in Adult Education

A second significant issue is focused on the subject of compulsory or mandatory participation in adult education. However, adult education and learning should not be confused

with traditional schooling for children and youth. Also, participation in an educational program does not guarantee learning.

Perhaps the words compulsory or mandatory are too strong, but basically they are accurate. The ultimate issue is whether laws will be passed to compel adults to participate in activities designed for adult learning. Short of this extreme position, there could be and indeed are in some professions and other fields requirements of evidence of participation in adult education programs. It is noted also that the issue of compulsory adult education leads to broader issues such as the nature of future society and the source of power in the society.

The most basic question is: would compulsory adult education interfere with the basic rights to justice and of individual freedom? It is recognized that there are few activities that do not in some way infringe upon some right or freedom, but it is necessary to keep the absolute in mind and thereby be able to judge the degree of infringement. In a pragmatic sense it is a question what one is willing to give up to achieve something else. It has been stated at the beginning of this statement that adult education is urgent and necessary. If indeed it is a necessity, then to what extent should adults be motivated and why, if at all, should they be compelled to participate? The type and degree of motivation, whether voluntary or compulsory, and the rewards, whether internal or external, influence learning by adults.

The issues may become clearer if a few illustrations from the U.S. are cited.

- Adult education programs are offered on a large scale in the military services. Since conscription has been abolished a major recruiting incentive has been the opportunities in the services for education.
- During the past several years there has been an expansion of adult basic education programs. Eligible adults are encouraged to participate in order to enhance their employability and promotion. In one city, recipients of welfare allowances who have not achieved a specified educational level are required to participate in educational activities if they are to continue to receive payments.
- In some prisons inmates who participate in educational activities are given time off from work during the day.
- In industry and business, especially the areas that are expanding or growing, on-the-job as well as off-hour and in-service programs are provided and may even be required for promotion.
- In many public schools children are dismissed during the day so that the teachers can participate in required in-service programs.
- In other cases, adults participate in programs so that they can more effectively lobby and vote, thereby influencing legislation and other decisions which affect them.
- In many of the professions adult education programs are currently being made available on a voluntary basis, but mandatory participation is being considered in several professions. In some cases evidence of adult education must be provided for relicensure or recertification to practice.

In each of the illustrative cases cited above, it may be argued that participation in these programs is not mandatory. However, the alternatives to participation are not attractive to say the least. The alternatives may take the form of discrimination and punishment, such as lack of employment, lack of promotion, refusal of the right to practice a profession as well as loss of status in the community.

The response to issues of compulsory adult education is clearly influenced by the response to three other questions: who will provide the funds to pay for the program; by whom would the law or mandate be enforced; and are there sufficient programs of all types available or that could be made available to achieve the goals.

In summary, it may be stated that compulsory or mandatory participation in adult education is being seriously debated in terms of its implications. At present the discussions are being made on specific aspects of the issue and for specific programs. The decisions are having a very significant effect on the concept and practice of adult education as well as on society.

C. Planning in Adult Education

A third major factor is planning. Planning in adult education is certainly not new but recently it has become more extensive and more structured. Although there has been some planning by institutions as well as individuals and groups, there is no overall coordination of planning in the field.

Life-long education is now generally accepted as a concept by leaders and agencies and to a lesser extent by adults themselves, and accordingly this idea must be built into the planning process. Furthermore, the idea of providing learning opportunities for all adults must also be considered. There is increasing attention being given to policy planning which is the basis of planning in specific areas. Policy planning involves the obtaining and analysis of data and the formulation and selection of goals. The planning process must have built into it the value system of the sponsoring institutions, and society, and must be sufficiently flexible to accommodate to the rapidity of change. In this way, the future will be designed not by static forces but by dynamic and flexible ones.

There are a number of factors which have resulted in a greater interest in planning. One is the need for accountability. Legislators and others are asking whether some of the major government-funded projects are achieving their goals or indeed whether or not the goals are achievable under the limitation of time, resources, and other factors. The question being asked is—is anything happening? In any case, there has actually been very little substantial evaluation of or accountability for the programs that are being funded. Consequently, but not necessarily only for this reason, some of the programs have been cancelled out and others have been curtailed. However, there seems to be general consensus that funded programs whether for one year or longer should be planned within a much broader framework.

Another factor is related to program objectives. It is evident that the goals of some major adult education programs are vague, general and often not even appropriate to the needs of the adults or of society. Also some programs are not offered at the proper educational level or are ineffective in the particular social or economic situations in which they are offered. Planning helps to give a sense of direction in the establishment of goals and objectives for individual fulfillment, institutional development and nation building.

Other factors reinforcing the interest in planning include: the necessity for continuous need assessment in a complex and changing society; the trend toward regionalization and establishment of consortia; the requirement by government and other institutions for master plans and guidelines in order to obtain funds; and the goals and values of the spon-

sor. As stated previously the planning in specific areas is based on policy planning. After policies have been developed there are a number of specific areas where planning is and can be effective. For example: cost analysis in terms of objectives to improve efficiency; utilization of resources of various agencies; evaluation; flexibility in program scheduling, and improvement of staff development.

Current planning is characterized by comprehensiveness, that is, it involves all levels and aspects of educational enterprise as well as all agencies. Some consideration is also given to the important task of strategy planning, that is, developing strategies or designs in order to implement the plans. It is evident also that planning is involving more people with different rôles in the planning process, and there is also emerging a small cadre of experts who assist in facilitating the planning process.

At the present time planning is being done at several levels of responsibility. For example: At the national level the President's Advisory Council on Extension Education and the President's Advisory Council on Adult Education are active in the area of planning. Also, in most of the 50 states, there are now committees on adult education which assume special responsibility for segments of adult education such as post-secondary higher continuing education or adult basic education. Some of this planning is stipulated by laws that require the guidelines to be developed and approved before funding can be granted. In other cases, a university, a group of universities, public schools or some other agency may develop plans. On other occasions, local agencies and boards, as well as their national counterparts, have been involved in planning for adult education. In general, the evidence indicates an upsurge in planning in adult education.

IV. Adult Education as a Profession or Field of Study

There is another development that is of major relevance to the three topics previously discussed. Simply stated, it is that adult education as a profession or field of study is maturing at a noticeably increasing rate. In the past many decisions governing adult education were made with little consultation with adult educators. Adult educators are now having a more significant influence on the decision-making process affecting adult education. The evidence or indicators of this development may be observed in several areas. As mentioned, the President of the United States has appointed two National Advisory Councils directly related to the field, one for Adult Education and one for Extension Education. Also, committees and councils have been appointed in states and regions for specific projects or tasks.

The fifteen or more national adult education associations or organizations are vigorous and healthy, and are increasing their effectiveness. Several of these organizations have been meeting together regularly since 1964 to discuss and act on issues of common concern. This group is now known as the Coalition of Adult Education Organizations (CAEO). Its effectiveness in bringing about cooperation is indicated by the fact that it sponsored the Galaxy Conference of Adult Education Organizations in 1969. All of the fifteen participating organizations held their annual conferences in Washington at the same time and held a few joint sessions. Prior to the Galaxy Conference, the Wingspread Conference was called and at it adult educators and other men and women of distinguished

national stature developed the Imperatives for Action for Adult Education. This comprehensive statement of needs and aspirations was the first nationally and widely supported statement on adult education. It was subsequently approved unanimously at a meeting of all the individual members attending the Galaxy Conference. At the Galaxy Conference, by resolute action, it was also voted to strengthen the CAEO and to create a political action organization. In any case, a very substantial amount of time and effort was taken to implement these two resolutions which were part of the Imperatives for Action. Unfortunately, the other parts of the Imperatives for Action received only limited attention and was never fully implemented. Perhaps an up-dated statement of Imperatives is in order. In any case the CAEO, the Galaxy Conference and the Imperatives for Action are all important developments at the national level.

A clearinghouse on Adult Education was proposed by CAEO to Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) in 1967. The proposal was approved and ERIC/Adult Education was established in association with the Library of Continuing Education at Syracuse University in 1967. In 1973 the Clearinghouses on Adult Education and Vocational Education were discontinued and a new one on Career Education is now established at Northern Illinois University. ERIC/Adult Education was and presumably ERIC/Career Education will be a substantial resource for adult education, particularly for the professional development of adult educators.

The universities, through graduate instruction, have also been increasingly active in the development of administrators, teachers, and research workers. The Commission of Professors of Adult Education has provided leadership in this area.

It is difficult to generalize about research, but it must be noted, albeit subjectively, that the quality of research is improving and the extent is increasing. The channels for dissemination of research, particularly through ERIC, have added to its usefulness in improving and expanding adult education. The Steering Committee for the Adult Education Research Conference has also provided leadership in this area. These substantial developments are indicators of the trend toward adult educators becoming increasingly committed to participating in programs for their own professional development.

Adult educators in the United States are aware of the contribution that people in other nations are making to adult education in the United States, and they are also aware that the activity in each nation is enhanced by a world approach and attack on issues and problems. For this reason they have sought the benefits of and perhaps in small ways have contributed to national and international conferences and activities in adult education. There has been, for example, substantial involvement in UNESCO. Also the CAEO is one of the founding members of the recently established International Council for Adult Education.